

T-P 3-28-68

Kohn Contempt Case Is Studied

High Court Takes Matter Under Advisement

The Louisiana Supreme Court took under advisement Wednesday a case contesting a contempt of court citation issued to Aaron M. Kohn, managing director of the Metropolitan Crime Commission, when he refused to answer a grand jury question late last year.

Kohn spent the night of Dec. 14 in jail after failing to answer a grand jury question about a commission informant before Criminal District Court Judge Matthew S. Braniff. He would not answer who told the commission that Eugene Norman

is conducting gambling operations in New Orleans, and he was sentenced by Judge Braniff.

In the hearing Wednesday, Kohn's attorney, Milton E. Brener, contended the question of Kohn's conviction was not moot although the grand jury he refused to tell about the informant was now out of office.

Brener said Kohn's record should be set straight in that he was within his rights in refusing to answer because under the rules of the Supreme Court, he had 14 days to ask for a rehearing, but was sentenced immediately by Judge Braniff.

He said neither the grand jury nor District Attorney Jim Gar-

rison had any business asking Kohn about a question pending before the Supreme Court.

Brener said the adjudication of Kohn in contempt was a permanent stigma although the question of his sentence is moot.

Mrs. Louise S. Kornis, assistant district attorney, said the matter is moot since if the state wins, Kohn can't be compelled to answer the grand jury's question since it is no longer in existence.

In response to a question, she said she believes the Kohn case was a civil contempt proceeding rather than criminal even though from a criminal court.